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AUTHOR Rasanen, Anne
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ABSTRACT

The effect of Finnish language experiences on the way native speakers of English evaluate errors made by Finns in producing English was examined. The study was designed to show the role of the criterion of acceptability in the evaluation process and to establish some of the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors that may affect the acceptability scale of a native speaker. Study variables include: age of the native speaker, whether the speaker is American or British, marriage to a Finn, length of stay in Finland, the amount of Finnish used, and whether the speaker teaches only practical skills or practical skills and another area such as literature or history. The Quirk-Svartvik method of measuring variations in acceptability, involving an operation test and a judgment test, and a test measuring interference from Finnish were administered. The results show a disagreement with regard to acceptability, unacceptability, and dubiousness of the test sentences. The six sociolinguistic variables produced statistically significant information. The effects of the four most influential variables of nationality, amount of Finnish used, length of stay in Finland, and field of teaching are described. (SW)

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VARIATIONS IN VIEWS OF ACCEPTABILITY - REPORT ON AN EXPERIMENT[1]

ANNE RÄSÄNEN

University of Jyväskylä

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INTRODUCTION

It is a necessary and everyday function of a language teacher to be closely concerned with the problem of correctness in language. This is especially the case for a foreign language teacher who is a native speaker of the language taught and who often faces the situation where he is asked to give a ruling on whether some particular utterance or sentence would be correct or acceptable or appropriate in a given context. One would think that he would have no difficulty whatsoever in giving the answer. After all, the question concerns his own language and he should be best qualified to answer it.

There is, however, a borderline area where it is impossible to refer directly to any grammatical rule in the language, and in this area the native speaker has to rely on his own usage and intuition when he is measuring the correctness of some utterance (Matthews-Breský 1974: 92). He has to decide whether something is *said*, and whether he would say it the same way himself; not *why* something is said in this way. In other words, it is a question of judging whether the utterance is acceptable in some context or not. This is roughly the meaning of the concept of 'acceptability'.

It is misleadingly shortsighted, however, to think that acceptability is a dichtomous yes-or-no concept or that it is a simple, unified phenomenon (Greenbaum & Quirk 1970: 1). Unlike grammaticality and meaningfulness it cannot be defined exclusively on any theoretical grounds (Lyons 1968: 137). On the other hand, the difference between grammaticality and acceptability is rather straightforward. Grammaticality is the technical part of language relating to the rules of a given grammar.

[1] The article is based on my M.A. Thesis Variations in Views of Acceptability Held by Native Speakers of English Resident in Finland. Department of English. University of Jyväskylä. 1976.

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Acceptability is a concept which relates to the opinion of an individual or a group of individuals (Enkvist 1973: 100). The distinction is needed because it is often unnecessary to go very far before disagreement appears among native speakers about the acceptability of utterances or sentences which follow the rules of a given grammar (Lyons 1968: 153). Thus the basic difference is that grammaticality belongs to the study of competence and acceptability to the study of performance, and the two terms must be differentiated (Chomsky 1965: 10).

DIMENSIONS OF 'ACCEPTABILITY'

It is possible for some sentence to be grammatically well-formed, but meaningless, and therefore judged as unacceptable. On the other hand, there are sentences that are both grammatical and meaningful but would not normally occur and, for that reason, will stay unacceptable. Then there are cases of an utterance not following the grammatical rules, yet being acceptable and meaningful in a speech situation (Corder 1973: 102 and Lyons 1968: 155). This shows that grammaticality is only one of the many factors that interact to determine acceptability. Their relation can best be described with the following formula:

----- grammaticality
—— acceptability

Most grammaticality falls within the scope of acceptability and vice-versa, ie. what is grammatical is usually acceptable and what is acceptable is usually grammatical, but there are a great number of borderline cases and it is these areas of acceptability that have been the focus of interest in this experiment.

Acceptability may occur at any level of linguistic analysis. One may speak about *phonetic acceptability* when judging a foreign accent, for instance, of *syntactic and morphological acceptability* when referring to the grammaticality of a linguistic structure, and of *semantic acceptability* when referring to the significance or meaningfulness of a sentence or an utterance (Corder 1973: 102). In *Semantics* (1974) Leech distinguishes lexical rules from grammatical rules on the basis of their different productivity in actual trans-

formations compared to their potential possibilities. He forms a three-fold scale with regard to the acceptability of the lexical item with reference to lexical rules: (1) *actual acceptability*, where the item is institutionalized; (2) *potential acceptability*, where the item can be generated through a lexical rule; and (3) *unacceptability of a lexical item*, where the rules do not allow the item at all, eg. **sheepable*. Leech also sees acceptability as a graded concept with no exact limits. It is, in a sense, a more fundamental concept than grammaticality in that it is more general and not restricted by some grammar (Leech 1974: 211-212). Lyons (1968: 140) has talked about *social acceptability*, ie. the acceptability of grammatically incorrect utterances in social communication. It is clear that acceptability is tightly connected with context. This is shown by generally acceptable ungrammaticality of different styles and normal spontaneous speech (Enkvist 1973: 98 and Thorne 1973: 188).

When an ungrammatical and unacceptable sentence is uttered, a native speaker will react to its deviance in some way. The degree of reaction depends on the degree of ungrammaticality of the sentence (Ziff 1964: 209-210). According to Chomsky (1965: 148-153) deviance is stronger where the rule violated is a linguistic item high in the linguistic hierarchy (eg. lexical rule).

Acceptability can also be said to have close connections with communicative competence. A person who masters only fully grammatical sentences and uses only them in actual speech events seems, to say the least, somewhat artificial. The acquisition of grammatical competence is not enough in linguistic communication, since grammaticality is only one of the factors involved in the determination of acceptability or appropriateness of utterances. A distinction must be made between (i) whether something is formally possible, and (ii) whether something is appropriate. The former refers to grammaticality, whereas the latter refers to acceptability, or actual usage, since what is being considered here is a person's selectivity, judgment and intuition. It is clear that such communicative competence depends on several socio-linguistic factors, such as social experiences, motives and needs (Hymes 1970: 277-284), and, because of differences in these, causes differences in the scale of acceptability of a native speaker of any language. Thus

acceptability is unstable in nature. The term is needed in order to account for the behaviour of native speakers in a communicative situation, as well as in a situation where they are required to evaluate second language learners' productions, at whatever level of linguistic analysis this may be. For this reason it is necessary to establish the areas in which acceptability or unacceptability might occur.

PROBLEMATIC AREAS

In the same way as the speaking habits of second language learners may convey features which the learner has carried over from his mother tongue and which do not always coincide with the conventions of the second language, a bilingual speaker may carry the speaking habits of the target language over to his mother tongue as a result of a long language contact (Weinreich 1953: 1). This interference will also naturally influence the native speaker's scale of acceptability. The strength of these transferred habits it, however, often underestimated, even though it is readily admitted that, eg. a person who stays in a foreign country for a long time and uses mostly the language of that country very often finds himself using the same expressions, disregarding their possible unacceptability, in his mother tongue.

Since it is clear that in many cases the criterion of native speaker usage remains the most useful way of measuring the correctness and acceptability of an utterance, differences appear in the way those native speakers of English who are teaching English as a foreign language, and in a foreign country, evaluate the utterances and sentences produced by their students. This particular group was the object of this experiment. Very many of the native speakers of English in Finland have stayed here for several years and speak Finnish more or less fluently. It is reasonable to believe that since acceptability is unstable in nature, a long stay in Finland and knowledge of the Finnish language and social life will affect the criteria of acceptability in several ways.

This experiment aimed at showing the role of the criterion of acceptability in the evaluation process and establishing some of the socio- and psycholinguistic factors that may affect the acceptability scale of a native speaker. Of these factors the following problematic areas can be specified:

(i) does the age of the native speaker have any influence on his evaluation?
(ii) are there any differences between the judgments of British and American

native speakers of English?

(iii) does the fact that the informant is married to a Finn have any effect on his tolerance of errors?

(iv) what effect does the length of stay in Finland have on his scale of acceptability?

(v) how does the amount of Finnish that the informant uses affect his tolerance of errors?

(vi) are there any differences between the native speakers of English teaching practical skills only and those teaching practical skills and, for instance, literature or history?

The main concern was to examine how the experiences that the native speakers of English might have of Finnish affect the way they evaluate errors made by Finns in producing English. It is clear that in most cases they can recognize the reason for making a particular error, because they are familiar with the structure of the Finnish language.

TEST DESIGN

The first experiments concerning an actual judgement of linguistic acceptability were conducted by Randolph Quirk and Jan Svartvik at University College in London in the late 1960's. In *Investigating Linguistic Acceptability* they describe a technique for establishing degrees and kinds of acceptability in English sentences (for details, see Quirk and Svartvik 1966). The Quirk-Svartvik method was developed and retested in the elicitation studies carried out by R. Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum. With these they tried to outline the differences between attitudes to usage and what people actually said (for details, see Greenbaum and Quirk 1970).

This experiment adopted the Quirk-Svartvik method of measuring variations in acceptability. However, since the purpose of the study was also to find out what factors lie behind these variations, two additional sections (a questionnaire and an interference test) were added to the test battery.

The circumstances under which this experiment was carried out made a random sample of the native speakers of English resident in Finland impossible. Since the greatest interest lay in how the opinions of the native English teachers in Finland varied with regard to acceptability as complete a sample as possible was chosen from the English departments

at the universities of Jyväskylä and Oulu.

As is clear, there are, of course, several socio- and psycholinguistic factors which influence the scale of acceptability of a group of native speakers. These must be taken into account when deciding upon the reason for a certain difference among the informants. In this study a questionnaire was used to establish various sociolinguistic variables that were considered relevant. From the items of the questionnaire the following explanatory variables were specified:

	groups
1. the age group of the informant	I 20-25 II 26-30 III 31-
2. nationality	I English II American
3. marital status	I married to a Finn II not married to a Finn (or not married at all)
4. amount of Finnish used in everyday situations (scale 1-6)	I min. 4 (not at all) II max. 6 (all the time)
5. length of stay in Finland	I less than 1 year II 1-3 years III 3-7 years IV more than 7 years
6. field of teaching	I only practical skills II both practical skills and eg. literature

These variables were crosstabulated with the actual test results and tested statistically.

Three kinds of acceptability tests were used in the experiment. The first and the second test (operation test and judgment test) were almost identical with those used by Quirk and Svartvik. In this way it was possible to compare the results with their results. The third test was made up of 32 sentences showing interference from Finnish which were chosen from the examination papers of Finnish students of English. The items were chosen on the basis of error hierarchy lists provided by some of the teachers.

Operation Test. - The Quirk-Svartvik operation test included 50 sentences on which the informants had to perform an easy operation (eg. turn

the sentence from the present into the past tense, from the negative into the positive, from the singular into the plural, and vice versa). Some of the sentences were perfectly normal English sentences and some had an unusual or deviant structure. The idea was to measure the acceptability of the sentences indirectly so that changing the basic structure of the sentence in the operation process implied deviance and unacceptability of the test sentence. This served as a criterion for scoring: if the crucial point was corrected, the answer was scored as Relevant Non-Compliance (RNC), and if the informant just obeyed the instructions to perform the operation, the answer was scored as Compliance (C). All the other changes (eg. punctuation, errors in spelling) were scored as Other Versions (O) or irrelevant non-compliances.

Judgment Test. - In the judgment test the informants were asked to make a snap judgment on the same 50 sentences according to the given threefold scheme (1) wholly natural and normal, (2) marginal and dubious and (3) wholly unnatural and abnormal. This part, then, measured acceptability directly.

The Quirk-Svartvik test sentences can be classified in two ways. Firstly, they consist of three main groups of sentences: control sentences, selection test sentences and actual test sentences. In this experiment the selection test was excluded and the sentences of the group (eg. items like *have not, haven't, don't have, haven't got*) were treated as normal test sentences. The 12 control sentences were used to ensure that the operations as such did not cause any difficulty. Accordingly, it was expected that the informants would find them wholly unacceptable in the judgment test. Secondly, the test battery could be devided into 25 sentence pairs, of which one was a deviant or unusual and the other a normal English sentence. The pairs were of equal length and had an identically structured nominal group. They included several linguistic areas, eg. double complementation, voice, use of pronouns, closed items, etc. (for test sentences, see Appendix 1).

Interference Test. - In this part of the test battery the testees were required to judge a series of new sentences according to a given five-point scale: (1) wholly acceptable, (2) acceptable but unusual,

(3) acceptable but irritating, (4) unacceptable but understandable and (5) wholly unacceptable (later scored as 1-2 acceptable, 3 marginal, 4-5 unacceptable). All these sentences were chosen on the basis of interference from Finnish (see Appendix 4). However, to establish the degree to which each informant was familiar with the structure of the Finnish language, this fact was not stated to them, but the informants were asked to consider what seemed to be the cause for a particular error. Some potential 'sources' of error were suggested (eg. overgeneralization of a grammatical rule, interference from Finnish, from Swedish, etc.), but the informants could also give their own suggestions.

The information gathered by means of the questionnaire and the test provided relatively large data for the analysis. However, the informant group being so small (18) any kind of empirical evidence reached can be seen only as an indication of the effect of the factors provoking changes in acceptability. For the same reason, it was not possible to use many statistical devices, eg. correlations, which could otherwise have provided useful information with regard to the causes behind the observed differences.

TEST RESULTS

There are naturally several restricting factors that affect the analyzing process. One of them is the size of the informant group. Another is the absence of context. Furthermore, there is the complexity of the intervening socio- and psycholinguistic impact and the artificiality of a testing situation. The results, however, show clearly that there is disagreement with regard to acceptability, unacceptability and dubiousness of the test sentences. The diagram on the following page describes the development in the area of marginal sentences in the Quirk-Svartvik test. The left end of the axis shows the agreement on the acceptability of the sentences, whereas the last item (5) on the right end of the axis is considered totally unacceptable by all informants. Item 29 has the highest frequency number, which means that 10 out of 18 informants were unable to decide whether the sentence *They don't want some cake* was acceptable or unacceptable to them.

The general score tables for each test can be found in the Appendices of this article (App. 1-3). On the whole, the results in the Quirk-Svartvik tests of this experiment followed the line of the results in the original experiment. In general, the informants of this test group were somewhat

more tolerant, placing fewer items in the clearly deviant group of sentences and more items in the 'query' group. The native speakers seemed to be rather more sensitive to semantic inconerence than to grammatical deviance, which is shown by great disagreement between them. In the interference test, then, the group of 'grammatical errors' (eg. items 7, 8, 17, 18, 29) produced the most unanimous answers. The 'lexical group' (eg. items 1, 14, 20, 23) had the clearest division of attitudes. The crucial point seemed to be the communicative value of the sentence; if that was affected, the sentence was immediately rejected. As for the sources of the errors, those informants who had been in Finland for a long time were able to find the source in interference more easily. Other were not ready to judge the errors as intralingual, or resulting from inexplicit teaching.

The most interesting results were those discovered by means of cross-tabulating the sociolinguistic variables with the results of the test. The six sociolinguistic variables described earlier all produced statistically significant information. The contigency tables formed for each variable and the results of each test separately were tested with the Chi-square test or the Student's t-test in order to establish the possible cause-effect relations. I shall here concentrate on describing the effect of the four variables which proved to be most influential, namely (2) nationality, (4) amount of Finnish used, (5) length of stay in Finland and (6) field of teaching.

Nationality. - The purpose of this variable was to show what kind of differences there might be in the answers of the British and American speakers of English.

Table 1. Differences in the Operation Test results for British and American speakers.

	N
E = English	13
A = American	5

Nationality	C		RNC		O		TOTAL	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
E	59	285	33	155	8	40	100	480
A	60	102	23	38	17	29	100	169
Total of answers (n)		387		193		69		649

df = 2, X^2 = 15.11, $p < .001$

Table 2. Differences in the Interference Test results for British and American speakers of English.

	N
E = English	13
A = American	5

1. wholly acceptable
2. acceptable but unusual
3. acceptable but irritating
4. unacceptable but understandable
5. wholly unacceptable

Nationality	1. %	1. n	2. %	2. n	3. %	3. n	4. %	4. n	5. %	5. n	TOTAL %	TOTAL n
E	35	94	11	29	6	17	42	114	6	18	100	272
A	23	36	12	19	5	8	37	60	23	37	100	160
Total of answers		130		48		25		174		55		432

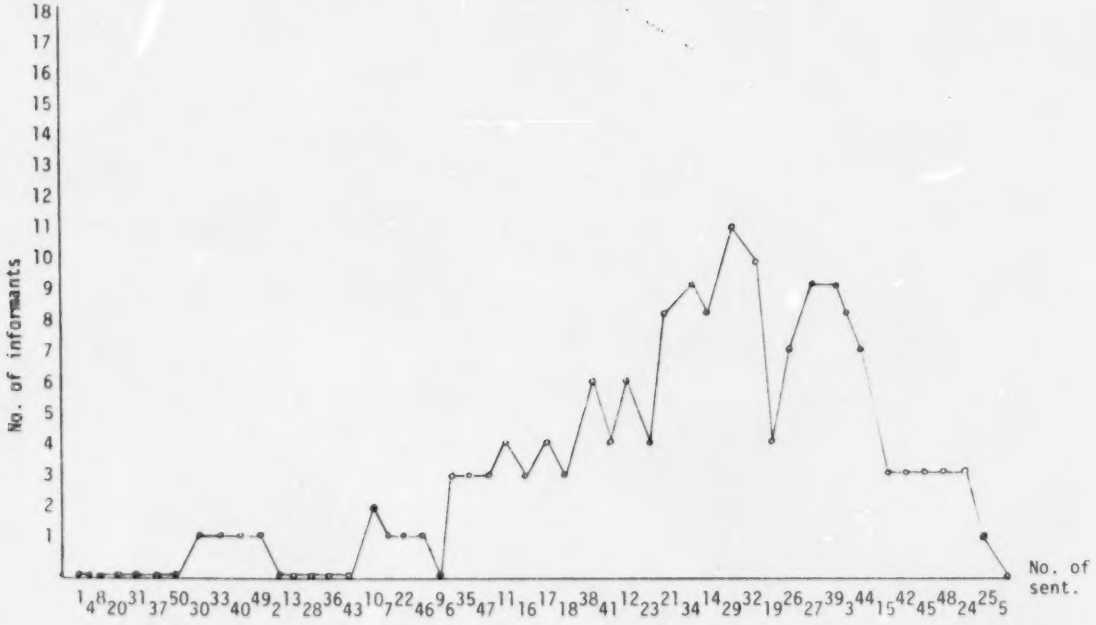
df = 4, X^2 = 28.30, $p < .001$

The percentages show that in the Operation Test the British informants were more sensitive to the crucial points of the sentences, whereas the Americans had more not-relevant non-compliances. The differences are clearly significant statistically. On the other hand, no real differences could be seen in the Judgment Test, but both groups agreed on the acceptability, dubiousness and unacceptability of the test sentences.

In the Interference Test (Table 2), however, the Americans were more critical in their evaluation. They accepted fewer sentences and placed a greater number of test items in the 'wholly unacceptable' column than the British informants. The British thus seemed to have a higher limit of tolerance. On the other hand, there is no clear difference as to which sentences were considered unacceptable but understandable.

This difference between the two groups can be considered essential as the Americans' length of stay in Finland did not differ much from that of the British. What might have had some influence on the results is that only one of the American informants was married to a Finn, in which case the amount of Finnish known by these informants is most probably less than with those British informants who had a Finnish wife. It is natural that this difference would most probably be seen in the Interference Test results. Moreover, the American informants were generally younger than the British and thus had less experience in teaching English as a foreign language. This fact would also explain their low tolerance towards the deviances in the Interference Test.

Diagram 1. Number of queried sentences.



Amount of Finnish used by the informants. - To find out whether those who were married to Finns estimated the amount of Finnish that they used in everyday situations as higher than those who were not married to Finns, two of the variables in the questionnaire (marital status/nacionality of the spouse and amount of Finnish used) were tested together as regards their dependency on each other. It was hypothesized that these two factors are interrelated. The informants estimated the amount of Finnish they used according to a six-point scale: (1) not at all, (2) less than half the time, (3) half the time, (4) more than half the time, (5) almost always and (6) all the time. Thus, the minimum number of points in this item was 4 the maximum being 24. The mean of the first group (married to a Finn) was 11.8, and the mean of the second group (not married to a Finn) was 6.4, which was quite close to not using Finnish at all.

Table 3. Differences in the amount of Finnish used by the two groups:
I married to a Finn
II not married to a Finn

Group	Mean	SD	N
I	6.36	3.45	7
II	11.83	4.35	11

$t = 2.85$, $df = 16$, $p < .001$

The figures show that the difference between the amount of Finnish used by these two groups is significantly great. The results thus prove that those who are married to Finns tend to use a lot more Finnish than those who are not married to Finns, and the hypothesis can thus be accepted as being correct.

Length of stay in Finland. - This can be considered the most important and influential variable in that all tables can serve as evidence of the effect that a long stay in a foreign country can have on one's acceptance scale. The instability of acceptability has already been discussed in the first part of this article, and it seems justified to say now that, on the basis of these results, a long stay does have effects on how the native teachers judge their students' work. On the other hand, however, it seems that the native speaker does not become more tolerant the longer he stays in the foreign country. On the contrary, there is a clear return to the

attitude that he had when he came to the country.

The seven groups of the questionnaire are here regrouped as four new ones in order to make them comparable with each other.

Table 4. Differences occasioned by length of stay of informants in Finland: Operation Test

		N
group I	less than 1 year	6
group II	1-3 years	5
group III	3-7 years	4
group IV	more than 7 years	3

Length of stay	C		RNC		O		TOTAL	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
I	63	130	21	43	16	34	100	207
II	58	106	34	64	8	15	100	182
III	55	82	39	57	6	9	100	148
IV	63	69	27	29	10	11	100	109
Total of answers		387		193		69		646

df = 6, X^2 = 30.0, $p < .001$

As Table 4 shows, in the Operation Test results the decline and the rise in the number of compliances is clear. In the first group 63 % of the test items were easy enough to operate on, the percentage of the third group being only 55 %. The amount of relevant non-compliances follows the same trend. On the other hand, 27 % of the answers of the last group had relevant non-compliances, which is somewhat more than in the first group.

In the Judgment Test results the first and the last groups were identical, whereas the results of the two mid-groups differed from the results of the Operation Test in that the attitudes were the clearest in the second group, instead of the third one. These informants were definitely the least tolerant. The significance level was, however, quite low.

As for the Interference Test results (in Table 5 on the following page), it is clear that the second group was the least tolerant, placing 71 % of the test items in the two 'unacceptable' columns. Again, the results of the first and the last groups follow the same lines. The third group has the highest percentage in two columns, which shows that these informants were not so ready to compromise on whether the

sentence was understandable or not, but regarded it as wholly unacceptable more easily.

Table 5. Differences occasioned by length of stay of informants in Finland Interference Test

		N	
group I	less than a year	6	1. wholly acceptable
group II	1-3 years	5	2. acceptable but unusual
group III	3-7 years	4	3. acceptable but irritating
group IV	more than 7 years	3	4. unacceptable but understandable
			5. wholly unacceptable

Lengtn of stay	1. %	1. n	2. %	2. n	3. %	3. n	4. %	4. n	5. %	5. n	Total %	Total n
I	28	45	9	15	5	8	30	48	28	44	100	160
II	18	29	7	11	4	7	43	69	28	44	100	160
III	22	28	15	19	3	4	22	28	38	49	100	128
IV	29	28	3	3	7	6	30	29	31	30	100	196
Total of answers		130		48		24		174		167		544

df = 12, X^2 = 30.60, $p < .01$

It seems clear that the results in these tables coincide thoroughly only with the two extreme groups. This could be due to the fact that as the native speaker gets more experience in teaching Finnish students and evaluating their papers, he also gradually becomes more conscious of the errors that the students make and of his own language. In addition, by this time, he has already learned much about the Finnish language and can easily recognize the features that are reflected in the foreign language of the student. On the other hand, the smallness of these subgroups do not allow generalizations, and the results must be seen as predictable only.

Field of teaching. - The last background variable of the questionnaire concerns the possible differences due to whether the informant covers anything besides practical skills teaching in his curriculum. As can be seen from Table 6 (on the following page) there are certain differences in the way the practical skills teachers reacted to the test sentences compared to the other group: the second group was less tolerant in their judgments. As for the Operation Test results, they also showed a slight trend in this direction, the siginificance level being, however, only .25.

Table 6. Differences in results of practical skills teachers and other teachers: Judgment Test

		N
group I	practical skills only	7
group II	both practical skills and eg. literature, etc.	11

Field	+		?		-		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
I	53	133	21	52	26	66	100	251
II	43	164	23	87	34	132	100	383
Total of answers		297		139		198		634

df = 2, X^2 = 6.45, $p < .05$

The Interference Test results show the reactions more clearly.

Table 7. Differences in results of practical skills teachers and other teachers: Interference Test

		N
group I	practical skills only	7
group II	both practical skills and eg. literature, etc.	11

1. wholly acceptable
2. acceptable but unusual
3. acceptable but irritating
4. unacceptable but understandable
5. wholly unacceptable

Field	1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
I	24	47	10	20	5	9	24	46	37	70	100	192
II	24	83	8	28	5	16	36	128	27	97	100	352
Total of answers		130		48		16		113		108		544

df = 4, X^2 = 9.68, $p < .05$

Surprisingly enough, group II appeared less tolerant in all tests, whereas group I found most of the sentences understandable, though unacceptable. Therefore, it seems that those native speakers who teach only practical skills appear less unsure about the acceptability or unacceptability of the test sentences. This might come from the fact that these teachers are most often compelled to grade errors and, for that reason, are more conscious of them. The results did not show, however, that they would have less tolerance towards errors, as might have been expected.

CONCLUSION

The present study makes no claim to completeness or expliciteness, as its purpose was not to look upon acceptability as a problem to be solved, but merely to show that such a notion exists and has an effect on the teaching process of a foreign language. In this respect the experiment was successful, in that it gave information about the variations in native speakers' opinions about acceptability. On the other hand, however, there are several limitations that have to be taken into account in the evaluation of the results of the whole test.

As far as the Quirk-Svartvik tests are concerned, it must be admitted that the results of the two experiments are quite close to each other, which can be considered a proof of the reliability of the test method. It is clear, however, that decontextualization of the test sentences, however practical this might be, seriously affects the communicative value of the sentences. It is precisely for this reason that the Operation Test was considered necessary in the first place. On the other hand, the results of the two tests do not correlate, which shows that there are differences in the way native speakers operate on sentences and in the way they judge them. Whether these differences truly reflect acceptability or not, cannot be decided on the basis of the results.

With the Interference Test the absense of context has an even greater effect on the test results, because the sentences have been taken from textual data, out of their contexts. In this respect the evaluation situation is really artificial. On the other hand, the errors that are included in the test are quite typical and it is probable that the native teacher is quite used to seeing them in students' papers. In this way it is easier to estimate the seriousness of these errors and to predict the attitude of the native speaker towards them.

From the practical point of view, the small size of the informant group was the greatest disadvantage in the analysis of the results. It was not possible to establish any real cause-effect relations between the results and the background variables which would have made the results more reliable and explicit. Furthermore, the empirical evidence reached in the study comes from analysing the frequency of answers (not of informants) in each group together with the sociolinguistic variables. Although the answers reflect attitudes, it is not certain whether the statistical tests would have given

the same results if the small sub-groups of informants had been tested. The reasons for the differences established in the results are, of course, to be found in the informants themselves, in their experience, background, education, social relations, etc. All these must be examined before reliable results can be achieved. More empirical evidence is needed and different types of test methods must be developed to measure variations in acceptability, and to make use of them in teaching situations. The Quirk-Svartvik method is an attempt to establish grades of acceptability and to introduce the concept of acceptability in general. The Interference Test was used here for special purposes; to find out how much Finnish the informants knew and how they reacted to errors due to interference from Finnish. An open test, in which the informants would have to give specific examples of typical errors that cause irritation, confusion, etc., might bring up new aspects of both linguistic and social acceptability.

It is also important to investigate whether both native and non-native language teachers' views of acceptability differ from those of other people, because the communicative situation in a classroom is not the same as in social life. If language teaching aims at the acquisition of communicative competence, the role of acceptability should also be considered in teacher training. It is true, of course, that for practical purposes, native speaker acceptability should form the basis for evaluation. In addition, in spite of the variations, established in this study, native speakers do agree in most cases, and especially in a teaching situation.

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QUIRK-SVARTVIK TEST
TEST DETAILS AND TEST RESULTS
GENERAL SCORE TABLE

C compliance
RNC relevant non-compliance
O other versions

\+ acceptable
? dubious
\- unacceptable

No. of sent.	Operation	Test sentence	Operation test				Judgment test		
			C	RNC	O	No answer	+	?	-
1	inversion question	They /always cóme here.	18	0	0	0	18	0	0
2	present	/Jack admired sincérity.	18	0	0	0	17	0	1
3	inv. qu.	I was /sat opposite by a stranger.	8	9	1	0	1	8	9
4	past	He /wants some cáke.	18	0	0	0	18	0	0
5	inv. qu.	/John works there éither.	5	9	2	2	0	0	18
6	positive	He /isn't much lóved.	15	2	1	0	15	3	0
7	plural	It's in the /front of the státion.	17	1	0	0	16	1	1
8	inv. qu.	You /painted your fence blúe.	8	1	9	0	18	0	0
9	singular	They /aren't, but they pretênd to be.	2	8	8	0	16	0	2
10	negative	He /dared to answer me báck.	17	1	0	0	16	2	0
11	present	/Whom did you sée?	11	1	0	0	14	4	0
12	inv. qu.	He is /silly and crýing.	13	2	1	2	8	6	4
13	present	Neither /he nor I knew the answer.	16	0	2	0	17	0	1

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14	plural	He is re/garded insane.	10	5	3	0	5	8	5
15	inv. qu.	/Food was lacked by the children.	8	9	1	0	1	3	14
16	present	/Dusk was creeping up between trees.	9	4	3	2	14	3	1
17	negative	The /old man chose his son a wife.	12	5	1	0	14	3	1
18	inv. qu.	It's the /man to whom I spoke.	11	7	0	0	12	3	3
19	present	We pro/vided the man a drink.	6	10	2	0	4	4	10
20	singular	They /own a large factory	17	0	1	0	18	0	0
21	past	I /turn on the light for the room to look brighter	16	0	2	0	6	8	4
22	present	Neither /I nor he felt a thing.	15	0	3	0	16	1	1
23	past	He /turns to the misiz Smith.	5	7	6	0	7	4	7
24	inv. qu.	They /painted blue their door.	3	13	2	0	0	3	13
25	negative	A /nice little car is had by me.	6	11	1	0	0	1	17
26	inv. qu.	/He sits always there.	2	15	1	0	2	7	9

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27	past	/Friendship dislikes Jŏhn.	9	3	4	2	1	9	8
28	negative	The /woman sat ŏpposite me.	15	2	1	0	17	0	1
29	past	They /don't want some cáke	4	11	3	0	4	10	4
30	inv. qu.	/Bill comes here tŏo.	18	0	0	0	17	1	0
31	plural	It's in /front of the cŏllege.	17	0	1	0	18	0	0
32	positive	They /aren't very lŏved.	11	6	3	1	5	9	4
33	inv. qu.	They /pushed the gate ŏpen.	17	1	0	0	17	1	0
34	singular	They /aren't, but they /clăim so.	8	6	3	1	5	9	4
35	negative	He /needs to go at tĕatime.	18	0	0	0	15	0	1
36	present	/Who did you want?	15	3	0	0	17	0	1
37	inv. qu.	She is /clever and pretty.	16	2	0	0	18	0	0
38	negative	Both /I and my friend saw the ăccident.	14	0	3	0	10	6	2
39	plural	I re/gard him foolish.	1	11	6	0	1	9	8
40	inv. qu.	/Clothing was needed by the poor.	12	6	0	0	17	1	0
41	present	/Wood was creeping up the hill.	14	3	1	0	9	4	4

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42	negative	A /wife was chosen his son.	1	12	5	0	1	3	14
43	inv. qu.	It's the /girl I spóke to.	15	3	0	0	17	0	1
44	present	Some /food was provided the man.	7	8	3	0	1	7	10
45	singular	They are /owning hundreds of ácres.	5	5	3	0	1	3	14
46	past	I /stop the car for the children to get óut.	13	1	3	1	16	1	1
47	inv. qu.	Neither /he nor they know the answer.	11	1	6	0	15	3	0
48	past	The /Miss Browns are türned to.	5	2	1	10	1	3	10
49	inv. qu.	He /pushed open the dóor.	15	3	0	0	17	1	0
50	negative	I have a /black Béntley.	14	3	1	0	18	0	0

APPENDIX 2

QUIRK-SVARTVIK TEST RESULTS (Judgment Test
PAIRED SENTENCES
GENERAL SCORE TABLE

No. of sentence	Test sentence	+	?	-
18	It's the man to whom I spoke.	11	7	0
43	It's the girl I spoke to.	15	3	0
9	They aren't, but they pretended to be.	2	8	8
34	They aren't, but they claim so.	8	6	3
39	I regarded him foolish.	1	11	6
14	He is regarded insane.	10	5	3
44	Some food was provided the man.	7	8	3
19	We provided the man a drink.	6	10	2
11	Whom did you see?	11	7	0
36	Who did you want?	15	3	0
32	They aren't very loved.	11	6	1
6	He isn't much loved.	15	2	1
27	Friendship dislikes John.	9	3	4
2	Jack admired sincerity.	18	0	0
16	Dusk was creeping up between the trees.	9	4	3
41	Wood was creeping up the hill.	14	3	1
49	He pushed open the door.	15	3	0
33	They pushed the gate open.	17	1	0
48	The Miss Browns are turned to.	5	2	1
23	He turns to the misiz Smith.	5	7	6
22	Neither I nor he felt a thing.	15	0	3
13	Neither he nor I knew the answer.	16	0	2
15	Food was lacked by the children.	8	9	1
40	Clothing was needed by the poor.	12	6	0
3	I was sat opposite by a stranger.	8	9	1
28	The woman sat opposite me.	15	2	1
42	A wife was chosen his son.	1	12	5
17	The old man chose his son a wife.	12	5	1
29	They don't want some cake.	4	11	3
4	He wants some cake.	18	0	0
7	It's in the front of the station.	17	1	0
31	It's in front of the college.	17	0	1
21	I turn on the light for the room to look brighter.	13	1	3
46	I stop the car for the children to get out.	13	1	3

5	John works there either.	5	9	2
30	Bill comes here too.	18	0	0
12	He is silly and crying.	13	2	1
37	She is clever and pretty.	16	2	0
45	They are owning hundreds of acres.	5	5	8
20	They own a large factory.	17	0	1
24	They painted blue their door.	3	13	2
8	You painted your fence blue.	8	1	9
26	He sits always there.	2	15	1
1	They always come here.	18	0	0
25	A nice little car is had by me.	0	1	17
50	I have a black Bentley.	18	0	0

INTERFERENCE TEST
TEST DETAILS AND TEST RESULTS
GENERAL SCORE TABLE

1 wholly acceptable
2 acceptable but unusual
3 acceptable but irritating
4 unacceptable but understandable
5 wholly unacceptable

A overgeneralization
B school teaching or wrong formulation of a rule
C interference from Finnish
D interference from some other language
E some other, what?

No. of sentence	Test sentence	Judgments					Sources of error				
		1	2	3	4	5	A	B	C	D	E
1	I have given up coffee bread.	5	6	1	5	1	1	0	10	0	1
2	I don't like it that I'm afraid of you.	2	3	1	9	3	1	0	9	1	3
3	She had two sons; the other was dark and the other was fair.	0	0	0	10	8	1	0	12	1	1
4	He has an own apartment.	0	0	0	11	7	3	0	8	1	1
5	I'm bored to my work.	0	0	0	6	12	1	0	6	0	6
6	Toini stopped talking offended.	0	0	1	8	9	0	1	5	0	6
7	The polluted water uses nobody.	0	0	1	2	15	1	1	7	1	3
8	Sisko refused herself.	3	1	1	3	10	2	0	2	1	1
9	Sisko gave her a coffee-cup to the chair.	0	0	0	2	16	0	0	7	0	5
10	After the cake Toini had won herself.	0	1	0	2	15	0	1	3	1	3
11	Perhaps a child does not always know this.	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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12	The organs were playing.	15	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	1
13	A kind of secretfulness appeared on her face.	1	3	0	10	4	10	0	0	1	1
14	I know it from out.	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	9	2	3
15	We opened our homedoor.	1	2	0	10	5	0	3	9	0	1
16	It was just the kind of silence that made me relax.	14	3	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
17	A committee was decided to be set up.	0	0	1	13	4	3	2	7	1	3
18	It is in a humorous way written book.	0	0	0	9	9	1	0	10	3	1
19	Also in Othello the good wins	1	2	1	12	2	2	1	5	3	2
20	In her lower lip there was an unsatisfied wrinkle.	2	3	2	9	2	1	0	7	1	1
21	Mostly these writers were catholics and protestants.	9	1	5	2	1	1	0	1	1	3
22	After a wiener Toini had overcome her bad temper.	4	2	1	9	2	1	1	5	2	3
23	Is there any taste in that subject?	0	4	2	0	12	0	0	6	0	6
24	The two last stanzas are a little freer in rhythm.	12	2	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	0
25	But underneath, deeper is the change to come.	0	4	1	8	5	0	1	5	1	6
26	I hoped that I would come to the meeting-place in time.	4	2	3	8	1	0	1	8	0	0
27	Tell me why did you go to the pool?	6	2	2	5	3	2	1	6	1	0

28	Common to these stories above is that both Clarissa and Septimus were concentrated to themselves.	0	0	0	6	12	0	0	8	2	3
29	I began to take off my daughter her mud-dripping clothes.	0	0	1	12	5	1	0	11	0	1
30	I have many things in my mind yet.	4	2	2	10	0	0	2	6	0	1
31	I very much doubt whether anyone can give a definite answer.	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	But maybe there's hope yet.	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX 4

INTERFERENCE TEST DETAILS
FINNISH EQUIVALENTS OF THE TEST SENTENCES

Original sentence	Student's production
1. Olen luopunut pullasta.	I have given up coffee bread.
2. En pidä siitä, että pelkään sinua.	I don't like it that I am afraid of you.
3. Hänellä oli kaksi poikaa: toinen oli tumma ja toinen vaalea.	She had two sons: the other was dark and the other was fair.
4. Hänellä on oma huoneisto.	He has an own apartment.
5. Olen kyllästynyt työhöni.	I am bored to my work.
6. Toini vaikeni loukkaantuneena.	Toini stopped talking offended.
7. Saastunutta vettä ei käytä kukaan.	Polluted water uses nobody.
8. Sisko kieltäytyi.	Sisko refused herself.
9. Sisko antoi hänelle kahvikupin tuoliin.	Sisko gave her a coffee-cup to the chair.
10. Kahvileivän jälkeen Toini oli voittanut itsensä.	After the cake Toini had won herself.
11. Ehkä lapsi ei aina ymmärrä tätä.	Perhaps a child does not always understand this.
12. Urut soivat.	The organs were playing.
13. Salaperäinen ilme tuli hänen kasvoilleen.	A kind of secretfulness appeared on her face.
14. Osaan sen ulkoa.	I know it from out.
15. Avasimme kotiovemme.	We opened our homedoor.
16. Se oli juuri sellaista hiljaisuutta, joka rentoutti.	It was just the kind of silence which made me relax.
17. Päätettiin perustaa komitea.	A committee was decided to be set up.
18. Se on humoristisella tavalla kirjoitettu kirja.	It is in a humorous way written book.
19. Myös Othellossa hyvä voittaa.	Also in Othello the good wins.
20. Alahuuli oli tyytymättömällä poimulla.	In her lower lip there was an unsatisfied wrinkle.
21. Useimmiten nuo kirjailijat olivat katolisia tai protestantteja.	Mostly these writers were catholics and protestants.
22. Wienerin jälkeen Toini oli voittanut itsensä.	After a wiener Toini had overcome her bad temper.

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23. Onko siinä aineessa mitään makua?	Is there any taste in that subject?
24. Kaksi viimeistä säkeistöä ovat rytmiltään vapaampia.	The two last stanzas are a little freer in rhythm.
25. Mutta syvemmällä on jo näkyvissä tuleva muutos.	But underneath, deeper is the change to come.
26. Toivoin, että tulisin kohtauspaikalle ajoissa.	I hoped that I would come to the meeting-place in time.
27. Kerro miksi menit lätäkköön.	Tell me why did you go to the pool.
28. Yhteistä ylläoleville tarinoille on se, että Clarissa ja Septimus olivat keskittyneitä omaan itseensä.	Common to these stories above is that both C. and S. were concentrated to themselves.
29. Aloin riisua tyttäreltäni hänen mutaatippuvia vaatteitaan.	I began to take off my daughter her mud dripping clothes.
30. Hänellä oli monia asioita mielessään.	He had many things in his mind.
31. Epäilen suuresti, voiko kukaan antaa tarkkaa vastausta.	I very much doubt whether anyone can give a definite answer.
32. Mutta ehkä on toivoa vielä.	But maybe there's hope yet.